

Facebook Reveals Home, Not Smartphone

Written by Marco Attard
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Mark Zuckerberg takes the stage and unveils an Facebook mobile strategy involving apps, not devices-- specifically "Facebook Home," an Android homescreen replacement app centered around the social network.



In other words, Facebook kills all rumours and hearsay by wanting to turn every Android device into the once mythical "Facebook Phone."

"A great phone might sell 10 or 20 million units at best," Zuckerberg says at the Home launch event. "Our community has more than 1 billion people in it. Even if we did a good job selling a phone, we would only be serving 1 to 2% of our community and we want to do more than that."

Home comes complete with a raft of neologisms-- there's Coverfeed (a rotating, visual Facebook news feed occupying the homescreen), Chatheads (handles chatting duties, believe it or not), App Launcher (allows one to view favourite non-Facebook apps) and App Drawer (an "all apps" screen replacement).

The launch event also hosts the announcement of the first smartphone to run Home-- the aptly named HTC First, a bland, averagely-specced (1.4GHz dual-core Qualcomm processor, 1GB RAM, 16GB internal storage, 5MP camera) 4.3-inch handset. Needless to say, it ships with Home pre-installed.

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Then again, the users of a number of other Android smartphones (initially those of a more recent HTC and Samsung variety) can simply download the app from 12 April 2013.

It all looks mediocre enough but it will probably serve Facebook users just fine, providing a level of Android OS integration similar to that the social network already enjoys with Windows Phone 7/8 and iOS 6. And, best of all, the Facebook averse just not need to bother.

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